

ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
201 N DIVISION AVENUE
POLO, IL 61064
Address Service Requested

Join us for online Worship
Sunday mornings at 9:00am!

Christ
our Saviour
is Born 

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Church Phone: 815-946-2919
Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net
Website: stmarkspolo.com
Reverend Terrie Wilder
Pastor's Phone: 815-677-3443
Email: tfwilder@gmail.com

December

2020

December 2020 St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Polo, Illinois 815/946-2919

E-mail: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net Pastor Terrie Wilder: 815/677-3443 Website: stmarkspolo.com

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|------------------|---|---|-----------------|
| | | 1 Pastor Text Study Work Second Hand Rose December 1-5 10:00-12:00 Drop off Jelly at St. Mark's | 2 | 3 10:00 Prayer Partners 10:00-12:00 Drop off Jelly at St. Mark's | 4 | 5 |
| 6 9:00 Online Facebook worship No outdoor worship | 7 Pastor's Sabbath 9:00am Sort clothes for Second Hand Rose | 8 Pastor Text Study 10:00-12:00 Drop off Jelly at St. Mark's | 9 | 10 10:00 Prayer Partners 7:00pm Zoom Church Council meeting | 11 | 12 |
| 13 9:00 Online Facebook worship No outdoor worship | 14 Pastor's Sabbath | 15 Pastor Text Study 9:00am Quilters | 16 | 17 10:00 Prayer Partners Deadline to submit articles for January Newsletter | 18 | 19 |
| 20 9:00 Online Facebook worship No outdoor worship | 21 Pastor's Sabbath | 22 Pastor Text Study | 23 | 24 No Prayer Partners Christmas Eve online special service | 25 Merry Christmas!  | 26 |
| 27 9:00 Online Facebook worship No outdoor worship | 28 Pastor's Sabbath | 29 Pastor Text Study | 30 | 31 No Prayer Partners | | |



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

201 N. Division Avenue, Polo, IL 61064

Email: stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

Church office for a message: 815-946-2919

Pastor Terrie Wilder: 815-677-3443

Mission statement: *St. Mark's ELCA is a community of believers who gather to hear God's Word in Christ; worshipping, serving, and proclaiming God's love for all people and the world.*

Indoor worship postponed

Council has decided to postpone indoor worship until at least January 14th in an effort to keep our members safe. Online worship continues!

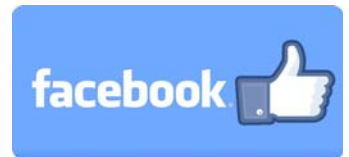
Join us for Worship on Facebook!

Sunday mornings at 9:00am

All you need to do is log on to St. Mark's Lutheran Church Polo Illinois Facebook page www.facebook.com/stmarkspolo. The website is open to the public.

Pastor Terrie will be doing a shortened message with a short sermon and then **offering communion for the community the first Sunday of the month only**. Have a piece of bread or a cracker handy along with juice or wine and we will share the Lord's Supper together virtually.

Pastor will continue to email worship on Saturday evening for Worship at home.



We Apologize!

We meant to lift up our saints on All Saints Sunday in our November newsletter.

Prayers were given for these Saints whom we loved and commit to our Lord on St. Mark's Facebook worship:



Brittney Long,



Ruby Isley,



Ron Greenawalt,



Terry Pontnak,



Brian Ely

St. Mark's will not be ordering Poinsettias for the sanctuary since we are not having indoor worship. If you have already sent in money for one, it will be returned to you. Please consider helping a local business and still buy a poinsettia from them to enjoy at home. Country Floral in Polo and the Polo Fresh Food Market both have them for sale.



Watch for a special video on Facebook on Christmas Eve!

Siblings in Christ,

The year has come to a close for the liturgical church calendar. We begin our new year with Advent. Advent focuses on waiting for Christ to come again. Our American culture will soon end our calendar year of monthly activities. It seems as though so much is ending.

As much as some things seem to be ending, other things like this pandemic and governmental anxiety will never end. We pray that Christ will come again!

One of my favorite movie musicals is Auntie Mame with Rosalind Russell. In this musical the wealthy Auntie Mame goes broke during the depression. The servants in her home put their money together to pay her debts although they had not been paid for some time. She proclaims that they need a little Christmas, right this very minute. The song is wonderful and the lyrics came to me today:

*“For we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute
Candles in the window
Carols at the spinet
Yes, we need a little Christmas
Right this very minute
Hasn't snowed a single flurry,
but Santa dear we're in a hurry”*



St. Mark's is blessed with a wonderful church council. We have diversity in age, gender and opinions and every one of them love their church. It was a very difficult decision not to have worship services for the month of December including Christmas Eve. After our zoom meeting was over and the decision was made, I wept. I need a little Christmas right this very minute. We need to gather, hear the birth narrative and sing Silent Night by candlelight.

I reminded myself that this is a sacrifice to keep God's people safe in a challenging time. You may not agree with the council or me however, it is our job to protect God's people even when it means sacrifice. Jesus knew this. Jesus was sacrificed for God's people. But that's not the end of the story. That crucifixion was the beginning of our story. The sacrifice of Jesus is story of resurrection and renewal.

We will be resurrected in this life and the next. When we can gather without concern for harming our neighbor, we will rise up and celebrate more than 150 years of ministry and beyond. We may be even stronger. In fact our ministry is still continuing in a great many ways.

Some may say that our decisions are based on fear and that letting such fear rule is wrong. Your council and I are willing to be wrong in order to protect God's children. I am sorry for the great disappointment for all and I grieve with you.

Christmas, the coming of Christ's historical event in Bethlehem is forever in our hearts! No one can remove it! So put up your tree, wreath and candles and rejoice! The savior has come and is with us all everyday and no virus or pandemic can remove it from our minds and hearts!

Honduras Project

Last year St. Mark's managed the Cookie sales for Honduras. Because of COVID19, we decided that collecting the cookies and sorting them would not be feasible. The need is especially high for Honduras as the last two hurricanes have devastated the country with flooding, loss of electricity, home damage and closed roads. Honduras is a poor country to begin with, so the impact causes further problems. It was decided by global mission that we should collect money this year. If you would like to help, send a check to the church and write Honduras on the memo line. We will then write one check from the church. You can drop off your check using the mail collection slot or you can mail it to the church. We will be sending the money on December 8th.

2020 PCCC Christmas Baskets

This year, St. Mark's is responsible for donating 200 jars of grape or strawberry jelly. A sign up sheet is available at the back of the church. 3 volunteers from St. Mark's are also needed to help drop off, sort, pack and deliver baskets.

December 10th 5:00-7:00pm: Drop off our donations to Faith Discovery

December 11th 5:00-6:00pm: Sort & Pack at Faith Discovery

December 12th 9:00am Delivery of baskets (Pickup available after 10am)



Questions, call Faith Discovery Church:

Jeremy Heller 815-441-5986, Jan Martin 815-440-2561 or Calvin Carver 815-677-5832

It's ok to drop of jelly even if you did not sign up to donate any. Any extra will be donated to the Polo Food Pantry.

Please drop off your jars of grape or strawberry jelly by Tuesday December 8th so that we can do a count.

3 days to drop off your jelly at St. Mark's Fellowship hall.

Please wear your mask if others are present

Tuesday December 1st 10am- noon

Thursday December 3rd 10am- noon

Tuesday December 8th 10am- noon

If you need your Jelly dropped off at another time or you need your Jelly donation picked up please call Pastor Terrie.

The times listed above are also a great time to grab your 2021 offering envelopes!! If you need your offering envelope box delivered to you, please call Pastor (815-677-3443) or Lori (815-440-0561).

October Finance Report

| Income | Expenses | Net Income |
|--------|----------|------------|
| 4,803 | 7,275 | -2,472 |

We are about \$2500 behind in our Mission Support this year.
Since worship is only online, giving has slowed significantly. Please remember your church.

.....

If you would like a Devotional book for October, November, December, please let Pastor or Lori know. One will be sent or dropped off at your home.

Council Highlights from the November Church Council Meeting

Treasurer's Report: Income for the month of October was \$4,803 with expenses \$7,275 with a deficit balance of \$2,472 for the month. Year to date deficit stands at \$9,025.

Pastor's Report and Worship Plans: Covid continues to challenge our members. Several members have had or do have this illness. Indoor worship is on hold. During the time of Pastor's ankle surgery, videos from our Seminarian Michelle were posted on our Facebook for worship. Pastor is healing slowly, but has been making a lot of phone calls to our members. We continue to follow Health Department guidelines.

Hospitality: The team plans to make wellness calls in December.

Education: On hold. Pastor is looking into online Bible Study in the January if there is interest. Please let pastor know topics & proposed time.

Local & Global Mission: The neighbors in need fund is getting very low at \$20. St. Mark's contribution to the community Christmas Baskets this year is 200 jars of jelly (strawberry/grape). Drop off of jelly at the church is scheduled for December 3, 5, and 8th from 10 a.m. – noon. If pick-ups are needed, please call the church and leave a message. There will not be a cookie sale for Honduras this year, but monetary gifts are encouraged.

Property: A new screen door was installed outside near the kitchen stairwell. Cheryl Goeking recommended to put tuning of organ & piano on hold until we are back to worship indoors. Wallpaper border in women's downstairs bathroom needs to be pasted up, looking for volunteer(s).

Old Business: Synod Mission Support. St. Mark's pledged \$5,350 towards the Synod's Mission Support program for 2020. Year to date the church has contributed \$2,337 and taken in \$3,090 congregational contributions toward Synod Mission Support. A motion was made and approved to pay \$750 at this time. Due to these unprecedented times continuing, the church council will discuss future contributions monthly.

New Business: Status of indoor worship – The Council vigorously discussed the return of indoor worship for December/January. It was decided to pause indoor worship during December/January. The Council will continue to discuss at upcoming meetings as conditions change. Church Council Nomination Committee – A nomination committee is needed as 3 council terms are expiring at the end of January: Amanda Carroll, Cindy Bauling, and Terry Jenkins may continue another 3 years after prayerful consideration. Three people are needed for constitutional committee with one being an outgoing person.

Polo Community Council of Churches

- Polo Community Council of Churches—Zoom Meeting held on September 22, 2020

- Devotions were to always remember: Helping the Hungry with Food, clothes and spiritual growth.

- Minutes from the July meeting were approved and seconded by a unanimous vote.

- **Treasurer Report:** General checking account has a balance of \$4717.77 which includes a \$7 refund from Country Companies. The policy will not be renewed for 2020-2021. The Hungry Neighbor account has a balance of \$792.56 after an August payment of \$100 to Dollar General/Polo Food Pantry is the recipient. Polo Church of the Brethren requests that the Grant money of \$1052 from the Community Garden fund be transferred to the Hungry Neighbor Account. After discussion, Suzanne Sorenson made a motion to transfer \$1052 of Community Garden money to the Hungry Neighbor acct. It was seconded by Don Hay and motion passed.

- **Second Hand Rose:** Sharon Miller reported that the store has been experiencing slow sales during the last two months.

- Christmas Basket project: Faith Discovery will host as well as chair this worthwhile project. A list of food for the baskets has been sent to individuals as well as churches. If you did not receive a copy, call Jan Martin @ 815-440-2561. Helpers are needed for sorting and packing baskets on Friday, December 11 from 5 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. They are asking for 3 people from each church for delivering baskets, which starts at 9:00 on Saturday, December 12.

- **Due to the COVID 19 virus, all Community meals, vesper services and Polo Rehab communion services have been postponed until further notice.**

Currently there a few things happening at St. Mark's:

- Prayer Partners meet on Thursday mornings at 10:00am. We have moved inside to the fellowship hall while still wearing masks and social distancing. Join us if you are comfortable while we pray for our congregation and the world.
- Second Hand Rose has opened for business and Carol's Christmas Cupboard is also open.

Children and adult Sunday school is on hold at this time.

.....

Ways to Help Polo and Beyond:

- 1) Sending a check directly to the Polo Food Pantry 115 North Green Avenue.
- 2) Mailing cards to residents of care facilities is always a good idea:
Polo Rehab 703 E. Buffalo, Polo 61064 (Linda Scholl and Jessica Kimpel)
Pinecrest 414 S. Wesley Ave, Mt. Morris 60154 (Barb Bowen)
Provena Center 1372 Woodside Dr., Freeport 61032 (Hazel Pontnak)
Regency Healthcare 612 West. St. Sterling 61081 (Tammy Karrow and Trudy Karrow)
Wesley Willows Rockford 61103 (Sibyl Acker)



Here is a list of residents that would benefit from receiving cards at the Polo Rehab Center: Nancy B., Cecelia C., Joy F., Marjorie G., Shirley H., Grace M., and Betty W.

- 3) Make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response (if designated to a specific disaster, please indicate in the memo line):
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELCA Gift Processing Center
P.O. Box 1809 Merrifield, VA 22116-8009
Give by phone Call 800-638-3522 to make a donation with a credit card. Operators are ready to assist you Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Central Time.
- 4) **Continue sending offerings to St. Mark's by mail or dropping in the mail slot at the north front door. THANK YOU TO ALL WHO ARE SENDING OFFERINGS**



FREE FAITH ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

Check out the link below for Sparkhouse Family Sunday School for the bible lesson for music, activities and downloadable sheets to inspire faith in your home with your children!

Scroll down for the lesson video and activities.

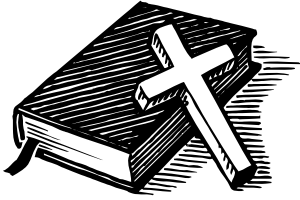
<https://www.wearesparkhouse.org/promos/family-sunday-school/>



We would love to have everyone on our email list for faster communication. If you need to be added to have changed your email please call the church office and leave a message or email the church at stmarkspolo@frontiernet.net

Thank you

Thank you to Cindy Bauling for getting the new outside door to the kitchen stairwell installed!
Thank you to Merla, Hailey and Gabe Boothe for weeding and raking the leaves at the church.
Thank you to John Engel, Oran and Tracey for getting the heat going.
Thank you to Lorin Gatz for filling those humidifiers several times a week to maintain our organ.
Thank you to Joyce Gatz for overseeing the tellers.
Thank you for the wellness calls by the Hospitality team.
Thank you Sara and Scott Thorngren for helping with church oversight and furnace issues.
Thank you Vicar Michelle for videos and Charlie and Linda Gall for helping to get one posted!



Reigle and Travis Roop

Prayers for Healing: Kent Anders, Lyle Reap, Lyle Printz, Shelby Jean and Richard Hose, Karla Gipe and Brad Shippert **Prayers for those in care facilities:** Sibyl Acker, Barb Bowen, Lois Garman, Tammy Karrow, Trudy Karrow, Jessica Kimpel, Hazel Pontnak, Jeanne Scholl and Linda Scholl. **Prayers for those in military service:** Logan Albrecht, JJ Bardell, Bryan Connell, Dustin Knapp, Brad

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

| | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|------------------|
| 3 | Leo Reinstra | 18 | Samantha Krenc |
| 4 | Colton McBride | 20 | Brittney Karrow |
| 5 | Larry Slager | 23 | Rita Dauphin |
| 6 | Diane Rasmussen | | Phyllis Houck |
| 7 | Matt Morrison | 24 | Maddex Woodin |
| 8 | Trish Patterson | 25 | Cindy Bauling |
| 9 | Bryce Haye | | John Ennenga |
| 11 | Elaine Sweet | 26 | Gary Hackbarth |
| 12 | Brad Sorenson | 27 | Melissa Johnson |
| 13 | Janet Garkey | | Linnea Thorngren |
| | Julia Hackbarth | 28 | Jessica Sullivan |
| | Carol Suits | 30 | Rylyn Karrow |
| | Ashley Ambeau | | |

Anniversaries

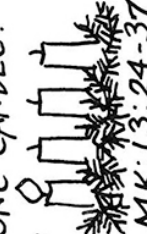





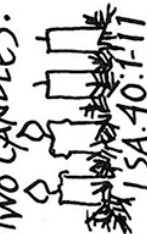
















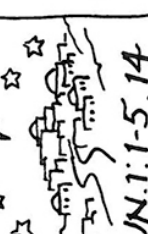
| | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 2 | Steve & Suzanne Sorenson |
| 22 | Larry & Karen Reap |
| | Pat & Leslie McPherson |
| 31 | Lyle & Barb Grobe |
| | Edward & Marian Schnulle |

The Meaning Of Christmas

Far away in Bethlehem, a Baby Boy was born;
Born with neither riches nor with fame,
Yet Wise Men came from all around to bring to Him their gifts,
And peace was felt by all who heard His name.
Angels watched Him as He slept, and gently rocked His bed;
Their voices singing softly in His ear;
His Mother and His Father both gave thanks to God above
For the greatest gift of all, their Son, so dear
They knew His life upon this earth would not be filled with wealth,
They also knew He would encounter strife;
But most of all, they knew that He would be a loving Child,
And teach the love of God throughout His life.
At Christmas, as we celebrate this Birth of Jesus Christ,
Let's keep in mind the truth of Christmas Day;
For it's not the Christmas wrappings, nor the gifts that lie within,
But our gift of love to others in every way...



WITH EV'RY PASSING DAY, AS SUNLIGHT DISAPPEARS,
THE DUSK DESCENDS, AND PRAYERS ASCEND FOR STRENGTH TO CALM OUR FEARS.
UNCERTAIN IS THIS TIME WHEN RANCOR SEEMS TO REIGN,
AND ILLNESS LEAVES WITHIN ITS WAKE SUCH SADNESS, GRIEF, AND PAIN.

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| LIGHT 29 ONE CANDLE.  MK: 13:24-37 | SEE THE 30 MOON.  PS: 8 | RECONNECT. 1 JOY 1 THESS. 3:6-10 | VAYA 2 CON DIOS.  DEUT. 31:6 | OPEN TO 3 IT.  ROM. 5:1-5 | GO GENTLY 4 NOW.  ISA. 42:1-4 | HEB. 10: 24, 25 ← 6 ft. → MEET TOGETHER...  |
| LIGHT 6 TWO CANDLES.  ISA. 40:1-11 | TASTE 7 HONEY.  MK. 1:1-8 | PREPARE 8 A CRËCHE.  ISA. 9:6 | WELCOME 9 SOMEONE.  HEB. 13:1, 2 | WATCH 10 SUNRISE.  LAM. 3:20-23 | BE PATIENT, 11  1 COR. 13:4-7 | ...FACE 12 TO FACE.  3 JUN. 13-15 |
| LIGHT 13 THREE CANDLES.  1 THESS. 5:16-24 | ENCOURAGE 14 SOMEONE...  ISA. 61:1-4 | WITH 15 PRAYER.  2 COR. 1:8-11 | GIVE. 16  1 CHR. 29:10-14 | KEEP IT 17 UP. *True* *Just* Honorable* *Commendable* *Pure* PHIL. 4:8,9 | SING! 18 (SAFELY)  ROM. 15:5,6 | GO OUT 19 DOORS...  ISA. 55:1-12 |
| LIGHT 20 FOUR CANDLES.  LK. 1:26-38 | FEEL GOD'S 21 STRENGTH.  LK. 1:39-55 | SEE 22 NEWNESS.  ISA. 43:18,19 | FOLLOW 23 LIGHT.  2 COR. 4:6 | ★ ★ ★ 24 ★ ★ ★  JN. 1:1-5,14 | ADVENT | |

YET SOON A STAR WILL SHINE. LOOK UP! KEEP WATCH AND WAIT.
THEN HEAR WITHIN A NEWBORN'S CRY THE LOVE THAT CONQUERS HATE.
THAT LOVE, WHOSE LIGHT BECOMES, THE DAWN OF GOD'S NEW DAY
WHEN PEACE AND JUSTICE WILL PREVAIL AND SORROWS FLEE AWAY.